

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01
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R 060620Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2604
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 4990

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: EFIN, PGOV, TU, SA
SUBJECT: SAUDI-TURKEY RELATIONS

REF: STATE 168519

1. THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN ISLAMIC TURKEY HAS CAST
THAT NATION IN A NEW LIGHT IN SAUDI EYES IN CONTRAST TO THE
ARAB-TURKISH ENMITY OF THE PAST. DURING THE PAST YEAR,
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EDITORIALS IN THE SAUDI PRESS HAVE GENERALLY LAUDED THE
ROLE OF TURKEY IN PROTECTION OF THE MOSLEM RELIGIOUS
MINORITY OF CYPRUS. THIS HAS NOT BEEN DONE, HOWEVER,
WITHOUT SOME APPEAL FOR TURKISH MODERATION IN SETTLING ITS
PROBLEMS WITH GREECE AMICABLY.

2. THERE ARE ROUGHLY 30,000 TURKS OR MORE WORKING ON

PROJECTS IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE SAG FAVORS THEIR EMPLOYMENT, PARTICULARLY ON PROJECTS IN SECURITY AND DEFENSE FIELDS. TURKISH PILGRIMS TO MECCA DURING THE HAJ SEASON HAVE BEEN INCREASING STEADILY. IN 1973, THERE WERE ABOUT 36,000. THIS FIGURE ROSE TO ABOUT 200,000 IN 1976 AND SLACKENED ONLY SLIGHTLY IN 1977 BECAUSE OF THE CHOLERA SCARE.

3. THE ABOVE SITUATION PLACES THE PROSPECTS OF TURKISH REQUESTS TO SAUDI ARABIA IN A RATHER FAVORABLE POSITION. WE CONCUR WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTION IN PARA 3 OF REFTEL THAT WE NOT REQUEST ANY SPECIFICS OF THE SAUDIS FOR TURKEY. SUCH ACTION WOULD APPEAR TO THE SAUDIS AS REQUEST TO PULL AMERICAN CHESTNUTS OUT OF A TURKISH FIRE. THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF CLOSER SAUDI-TURKISH RELATIONS REPOSE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED DEVELOPMENTS. THE TALKING POINTS WILL BE OF USE TO NURTURE THE FURTHERANCE OF SAUDI-TURKISH TIES.
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Message Attributes

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